

VZCZCXYZ0000
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBUL #0615/01 0710517
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 110517Z MAR 08
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3200

UNCLAS KABUL 000615

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP SHEREEN FARAJ AND MARK FORSTROM
DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [ELAB](#) [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN'S TIP SOLICITATIONS FOR G/TIP-MANAGED FY 2008
ESF and INCLE FUNDS

REF: 07 STATE 161503

¶1. Post has received four proposals and submits summary information below.

¶2. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) requests USD 234,014 for a "Prevention of Human Trafficking in Vulnerable Provinces" project to last 12 months.

Recognizing that one of the major reasons for the prevalence of human trafficking in Afghanistan is the lack of awareness of the issue among the general population, IOM intends to launch an awareness campaign, targeting key areas bordering Pakistan, Iran and Tajikistan where people are particularly vulnerable to trafficking. The proposed project will mobilize community members, including government officials, religious leaders and social workers, in a joint effort to combat the crime through roundtable discussions. IOM will also build the capacity of local media and support the production of counter-trafficking media spots for nationwide broadcasting.

The specific activities proposed in this project are as follows:

- To organize a total of five roundtable discussions in Kunduz, Mazar-i-Sharif, Nangarhar, Paktya and Herat for the representatives of concerned governmental agencies, religious leaders, social workers and members of mass media in order to raise their awareness of human trafficking and to encourage them to join forces to combat this crime.
- To organize two training sessions for teachers from Kabul, Kunduz and Mazar-i-Sharif
- To launch a Youth Volunteers Movement against human trafficking
- To train members of the most popular TV and Radio stations and print media on human trafficking issues in Afghanistan

The project will generate the following results:

- Approximately 250 government officials, religious leaders, social workers and members of mass media in five provinces with high prevalence of trafficking will receive comprehensive information about trafficking in persons,
- A total of 600 teachers, or 200 from each of the three provinces, will attend training sessions and gain information about human trafficking.
- A total of 450 students will be trained on trafficking issues and the Youth Volunteers Movement against human trafficking will be launched,
- A total of 100 members of mass media will be trained in Kabul and engaged in the counter-trafficking information campaign.

¶3. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) requests USD 490,024 for a "Measures to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Persons in Afghanistan" project to last 24 months.

While Afghanistan signed and subsequently ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on 24 September 2003, the Trafficking Protocol has not yet been signed or

ratified. A country of origin, destination and transit, Afghanistan still does not prohibit all forms of trafficking in persons and due to cultural mores, some victims of trafficking continue to be arrested or otherwise punished for prostitution and morality crimes.

However, the Ministry of Justice is in the process of drafting an anti-trafficking law that will be submitted to Parliament in mid 2008.

Thus, this project aims to complement the impending anti-trafficking legislation to strengthen the capacity of the government and the responses of the judiciary, prosecutors, law enforcement as well as civil society to adopt policies to prevent as well as investigate, prosecute, consider and adjudicate cases of human trafficking.

Carried out in line with the requirements of the Trafficking Protocol and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the project will create a comprehensive legal framework and an effective institutional structure to prevent and combat human trafficking in Afghanistan by establishing a pool of national experts of the judiciary, prosecutors, law enforcement and civil society to make up a National Commission to Combat Human Trafficking. UNODC will support this Commission to deal with all human trafficking related issues and to coordinate all project activities among the key stakeholders of the project. This body will be responsible for developing, reviewing, and monitoring counter-trafficking strategies and action plans and responsible for guiding and monitoring its effective implementation, including a National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.

Based on a situational analysis and legislative assessment, specialized multi-disciplinary training will be developed and provided to the judiciary, prosecutors, law enforcement and members of civil society at the provincial level to establish specialized task forces to combat trafficking.

14. The All Afghan Women Union (AAWU) requests USD 443,432 for a "Tackling Trafficking of Violence-affected Women in Afghanistan" project to last 12 months.

This project will create a shelter in Kabul for women and children victims of trafficking, focusing on former women prisoners in need of protection who are the most vulnerable to trafficking. There are currently four shelters in Kabul, a city of some 4 million people, but these shelters prefer not to house former prisoners. With the goal of accommodating 50 to 60 people and tracking their progress as they return to society leading productive lives, the shelter plans to provide health and psychiatric counseling; life-skills and vocational training through literacy and other courses such as in tailoring, handicrafts, embroidery, and carpet weaving; a nurturing environment to rebuild self-esteem; and to raise awareness of trafficking risks to prevent these women from becoming victims again. Many Afghan women find themselves in prison for refusing forced marriages, as a result of accusations by the husband or their own family. A woman who spends a night away in jail is thought to bring shame on the family, and in some cases the family will not allow them to rejoin the family after they are released from incarceration. Furthermore, due to cultural mores, some victims of trafficking continue to be arrested for prostitution and moral crimes. Consequently, these women easily fall into the hands of traffickers after their release, with the promise of a job or getting out of the country. They are either trafficked to Iran, Pakistan, Gulf countries or sold domestically. There are more than 200 women in prison at any one time. Helping to break the vicious cycle of trafficking, this shelter fills a gap that addresses the need of helping women, who have been incarcerated as a result of forced marriages, to transition back to society and prevent them from becoming victims of trafficking again.

15. The Afghan Women Skills Development Centre (AWSDC) requests USD 439,879 for a "Alliance-building to Combat Women Trafficking in Afghanistan" project to last 12 months.

In assessing the trafficking issue in Afghanistan, one has to examine the geographic location, social, political and economic conditions and the living setup of its people. Afghanistan is located astride the land routes between the Indian subcontinent, Iran, and central Asia. It is bordered by Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Iran. Despite the

progress of the past few years, Afghanistan remains extremely poor, landlocked, and highly dependent on foreign aid, farming, and trade with neighboring countries. It will probably take the remainder of the decade and continuing donor aid and attention to raise Afghanistan's living standards up from its current status among the lowest in the world. Much of the population continues to suffer from shortages of housing, clean water, electricity, medical care, and jobs, but the Afghan government and international donors remain committed to improving access to these basic necessities by prioritizing infrastructure development, education, housing development, jobs programs, and economic reform. Afghanistan is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and involuntary servitude. Afghan children are trafficked internally and to Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Zimbabwe for commercial sexual exploitation, forced marriage to settle debts or disputes, forced begging, debt bondage, service as child soldiers, or other forms of involuntary servitude. Afghan women are trafficked internally and to Pakistan and Iran for commercial sexual exploitation, and men are trafficked to Iran for forced labor. Afghanistan is also a destination for women and girls from China, Iran, and Tajikistan trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. Tajik women and children are also believed to be trafficked through Afghanistan to Pakistan and Iran for commercial sexual exploitation. - U.S. State Dept Trafficking in Persons Report, June, 2007

Status of women in the Afghan society is different from others because the Afghan women have a "layered" identity. She has a Muslim identity together with her Afghan identity. This implies that her life and position is conditioned and influenced by customary, religious and national norms, laws, rules and regulations. Most often, however, the reality is that her status under Ananat (customary laws) supersede both religious and national laws. +One comes across practices relating to Afghan women that would fail the test of compatibility with many provisions of Islamic law as well as the constitution and other statutory laws of the country.

The secondary position of the Afghan woman becomes apparent from the moment she is born. Celebrations accompany the birth of a boy, while and the birth of girl is greeted with complete silence. Women are, by and large, excluded from inheritance in general and landed property in particular. Before marriage a woman's property remains with brothers and after marriage the husband is responsible for all dealings regarding property. In a few families, women have some rights. Where women are educated, own property; they can decide other important decisions of their lives.

It is an established fact that women are not free under customs and local traditions. She is considered the property of her male family members (father, brother, husband). Sometimes, brides become the property of a husband's male hierarchy, especially in case of bride-price. The custom of Toyana (bride price) exists in almost all parts of the country. This practice becomes a source or means of exploitation for those involved in human trafficking business.

After getting married, a women's "ownership" is transferred to her husband's family which then assumes total control of her life. Even if she is widowed, she still remains the property of her husband's male family members or the head of the tribe and any man desirous of marrying her is required to deal with them. A man wanting to marry a widow needs to get permission from male in-laws of the widow and has to pay back Toyana. On the other hand if they fail to seek permission for their marriage, the head of the deceased husband's family is considered justified in starting an enmity with the proposing person. In some tribes if a widow has daughter or daughters, the price will be on the basis of the number of the daughter(s). In some of the tribes the bride price is fixed on the basis of clan, cast, weight, and now even on academic qualification. e.g. doctor, teacher, etc.

When marriages are decided on the bases of Toyana, then dissolution of marriage by divorce is almost impossible due to the concept of honor of the man attached to it, coupled with money invested by him. The practice of Toyana reduces women's status to a mere commodity and as a matter of property or ownership issue.

In the practice of Toyana, a general psyche based on the concept of investment is observed that looks for benefits that have a price tag. If the property has to undergo change for some reason or another, monetary returns are also considered as an essential pre-requisite. This very element becomes a key to exploitation of women into crimes such as sale of women for forced prostitution, bounded labour, drug carriers etc.

WOOD